BILL MASON'S BRIDE.

Half an hour till train time, sir,
An' a fearful dark time, too;
Take a look at the switch lights,
Fetch in a stick when you go through.
"On time?" Well, yes, I guess so—
Left the last station all right—
She'll come 'round the curve a flyin':
Bill Mason comes up to-night.

You know Bill? No! He's an engineer;
Been on the road all his life—
I'll never forget the morning
He married his chuck of a wife.
'Twas the summer the mill-hands struck—
Just off work, every one;
They kicked up a row in the village,
And killed old Donovan's son.

Bill hadn't been married more'n an hour,
Up comes the message from Kress,
Orderin' Bill to go up there
And bring down the night express.
He left his gal in a hurry,
And went on number one,
Thinking of nothing but Mary,
And the train he had to run.

And Mary sat down by the window
To wait for the night express.
And, sir, if she hadn't done so,
She'd been a widow, I guess.

For it must 'a' been nigh midnight
When the bridge hands left the Ridge—
They came down, the drunken devils!
Tore a rail from the bridge.
But Mary heard 'em a-working,
And guessed there was something wrong.
And in less than fifteen minutes
Bill's train it would be along.

She couldn't come here to tell us,
A mile—it wouldn't 'a done—
She just grabbed up a lantern
And made for the bridge alone.
Then down came the night express, sir—
And Bill was making her climb!
But Mary held the lantern
A-swinging it all the time.

Well, by Jove! Bill saw the signal,
And he saved the night express,
And he found his Mary a cryin',
On the track, in her wedding dress—
Cryin' and laughin' for joy, sir,
An' holding' on to the light—
Hello! here's the train—good-by, sir,
Bill Mason's on time to-night.

—*Bret Harte.*

PIG.

A well known congressman related to us the following story:

Quite a number of years ago, while a very young man, being fond of adventure, I sought and obtained an appointment as deputy United States timber agent, a position less dangerous than that of deputy marshal, but which, after all, served my purpose in that line. A few days after my appointment, I received instructions to go up White river, near the head waters of that beautiful stream, and stop the "wholesale" felling of cedar timber on government lands. I was warned against making any show of authority, as the people who made their living by robbing the government were reckless if not desperate. After a long and tiresome journey I reached the neighborhood of my destination, but I soon recognized the fact that not half of my difficulties had been surmounted, for although the land from which the timber was being cut was easily found, yet the men who were doing the work could not be so easily identified. It seemed that every stranger was regarded with suspicion, and that his approach was heralded in that rapid and mysterious manner so characteristic of mountain people. For several days I wandered around hopelessly, but at last I came upon quite an intelligent man, Captain Tempney, who seemed willing to give me information. I accepted his invitation to visit his home, a rude log house built in a little vale and covered with wild vines.

"Jes' come an' see me an' make yourself at home! You needn't look around for style, for you won't find it. Here, Pig, bring us some fresh water." The last remark was addressed to a girl about eleven years old. She had the brightest eyes I ever saw, and her pretty face, peeping from under her richness of glowing hair, reminded me of a moss rose. She took up the water-pail, and humming a wild tune, disappeared.

"My wife's been dead for a long time," said the captain, "an' me an' Pig live alone."

"Why do you call that beautiful child Pig," I asked. "It strikes me that Wild-Flower would be a better name."

"Her right name is Josephine. When she was a little thing I got in the habit of callin' her Pig, an' have kept it up. Here, have some fresh water. Only have to go to the corner of the house for a stream pours out of the bluff. Pig, have we got anything to eat?"

"Some cold 'possum an' potatoes," she replied.

"Fond o' 'possom?"

"Very," I replied, and a few moments later we were sitting around the table discussing a repast which, I think, for a hungry man, could not have been excelled. After the meal the captain went out to look after the few head of stock which he owned, leaving Pig to entertain me.

"Do you like to live here?" I asked, not knowing what else to say.

"I never have lived anywhere else," she said.

"Did you ever go to school?"

"Not much, but I learned how to read. Would you like to hear me read?"

I replied that I would, and she took down a worn copy of the new testament and began to read. Even her mistakes were beautiful. I have heard great preachers and professional elocutionists read the bible, but never before had the simple story of Christ seemed so charming. She finished reading, and, seating herself in a rocking chair made of small hickory saplings, she began to knit and hum her wild tune. I asked her to sing, and she did sing beautifully, and as I sat looking at her in fixed admiration, I mused that my escape from a love affair was only caused by the fact that she was a child.

"What is your name?" she said

"William Rockford."

"I'll have to call you Boots, for I can't remember your name, but I can always see your boots," pointing to the high-top cavalry boots I wore. "May I call you Mr. Boots?"

"Yes."

"Well, I will," she continued, "Mr. Boots are you goin' to live here all the time?"

"No, I shall go away after a while."

"An' never come back any more?"

"Perhaps I shall come back to see you.'

"When I'm a grown young lady?"

"Yes."

"That will be a long time, but I won't forget you, for I like you better than any body that ever came here."

Although she was a little child, yet I know that I blushed, for looking up quickly, she said: "I make you turn red, don't it? Here's papa."

"Now in regard to your business," said the captain. "You'll have to be mighty particular. The men that are doin' that devilment are mighty bad citizens, an' when they find that you want to take their livin' away from them, they'll fight you."

"I have not come to make arrests. A great many of the men are doing this work through ignorance of the law, and my mission is mainly to warn them, for the next expedition sent out by the government will be to arrest the parties and punish them."

"That's mighty kind in the government, but the fellers will think it's a sort o' bluff, an' when you commence to give 'em advice, like as not they'll tell you to pop your whip an' go ahead. I know that thar's some o' them that would just as soon shoot you as to look at you."

We talked until bed-time, and when I went to sleep, I dreamed that the beautiful little girl sat reading to me.

The next day I traveled around considerably. I met several men who confessed that they had been cutting timber from government land, but that they did not know it was a crime, and promised me that they would desist. I was repeatedly warned, though, concerning certain parties who would treat my kindness with contempt.

One day I heard that the Simmons boys, quite a large family of semi-outlaws, were cutting timber at night and rafting it down the river. Near the place where the work was going on, stood an old deserted cabin, and telling the captain that I would spend the night there, I left his hospitable abode, and after walking about a mile and a half, reached the place. I built up a big fire and sat down to begin my lonely watch. A heavy rain storm came up, and the flashes of lightning, illuminating for a second at a time my gloomy surroundings, made a wierd picture. The darkness of the night was so intense that it seemed to knock at my door and demand admittance. While I lay on the floor, smoking, something actually tapped at the door.

"Come in," I said, and Pig, the captain's little girl, entered, dripping wet.

"Why, Pig, what on earth brought you here?"

"Leave here, Mr. Boots, for they are coming after you."

"Who?"

"The Simmons boys. They came to our house just now and asked for you, an' when papa said you were not there, they said they would find you an' hang you. I slipped out while they were talkin' an' come to tell you. Go away as quick as you can," and before I could recover from my surprise, she had disappeared in the darkness. I put on my overcoat, and stepped to the door. I heard them coming. Flight would be fatal, defense useless. Suddenly I thought of the loft overhead at which I had been gazing, and in another moment, I scarcely know how, I had climbed up and stretched myself on the frail boards. I had not more than settled myself when the wretches burst into the room below.

"Oh, he's aroun' here summers," said one fellow who seemed to be the leader, a mean looking rascal, for I looked through a crack and shivered.

"Reckin he's out makin' his roun's," said a member of the gang. "Lige whut did yer do with the rope?"

"Got it here."

"Reckin afore mornin' the cap'n will wush he hadn'ter interfered with other fokls' business."

"Tied him hard, did yer Jake?"

"So hard he kain't move, an' left him layin' on the edge o' the bluff, just above the house. Ef he wanster role off an' kill hisself, all right."

"Whar was the little gal all the time, boys?"

"In bed, I reckin, fur I didn't see her. By G—d, I'd er tied her, too, ef I'd a seed her. Now, fellers, the next thing is to find the gov'ment chap. Who's got the bottle? Lige, say yer got a quart that ain't been toch?"

"Yas, an' as red as a tarrapin's eye."

"Wall, pass her aroun' an' less tap her."

The bottle was passed and they all drank freely.

"Glad he built a fire," said one whom I recognized as Lige. "Reckin he's gone down ter the clearin'. Wait a while an' he'll be in."

"Tell yer whut's less do, fellers," said a short red-headed fellow whom I would like to have shot. "Less set the cabin afire an' when he sees it he'll come up ter see whut's the matter."

"Then we'll have ter stay out in the rain."

"Wall, gosh dang it, who keres fur the rain? Whut do yer say, Lige? Say the word an' off she goes."

"You fellers ain't got no sense. Don't yer know that ef yer'd fire the cabin the feller'd know we was airter him an' take ter his heels."

"Wall, whut'll we do? Set aroun' here all night an' wait?"

"Never mind," said Lige. "Jake, climb up thar an' git some dry boards fur the fire," and the fellow addressed began to climb up. He had just taken hold of a board near me, and I was just on the eve of shooting him and taking my chances, when Lige said:

"Never mind, Jake. It won't do ter have too bright a fire, fur he'll think that somebody's here. Who's got the bottle. Well, d— it, why don't yer pass her? Think we're a lot of cattle?"

Again they drank freely. I knew that if they kept on drinking I might have some chance of escape, and for the first time in my life I regarded whisky as a friend. The thought occurred to me that I could make a hole in the roof and crawl out. I began the work at once.

"What's that noise?" asked Lige.

"It's Jake rubbin' his big hoof on the floor," said one of the gang.

"No it ain't, nuther," Jake replied.

"'Tend ter yer own business, will yer, an' let yer betters alone."

"Needn't be so touchy about yer foot."

"Wall, my foot's my own, an—" but the rest of the uninteresting sentence was lost as I thrust my head through the hole. I crawled along the roof, which seemed to rattle and made noise enough for a wagon and team. I had no difficulty in climbing down, and with a heart overflowing with gratitude to the bravery of little Pig, I was soon traveling rapidly toward the captain's house. When I reached there I found Pig in great distress. "Papa is gone," she sobbed, "an' I can't find him. I have called an' called, but he won't answer."

"I explained as quickly as I could, and ascending to the bluff, we found the captain bound and gagged.

"We'll fix 'em," he said when we released him. "We'll get two or three neighbors an' capture the scoundrels."

We aroused the neighbors and were soon en route for the cabin. The whisky had done its work, and we heard singing and dancing as we approached. Bursting into the room we surprised the gang, and had no difficulty in enforcing submission. We bound them with the rope that had been intended for me and took them to the captain's house. Next day we put them on a flat-boat, took them down the river and delivered them to the United States authorities.

"What became of Pig?" we asked when the congressman seemed to have reached the end of his story.

"Why, sir, she grew to be the most beautiful woman and—"

"May I come in Mr. Boots?" said a handsome woman appearing at the door.

"Yes, I want to introduce you. This is Pig, and I think she is the best investment that was ever made in pork."

—*Arkansaw Traveler.*

From Kansas City to Memphis.

The Kansas City, Fort Scott and Gulf railroad is now completed. The first through passenger train left the union depot Sunday evening, Oct. 21st at 5 o'clock, and arrived in Memphis at 5 o'clock Monday evening, right side up with care.

The Kansas City, Fort Scott and the Gulf railroad company was incorporated March 8, 1865, as the Kansas City and Neosho Valley Railroad company.

On October 10, 1868, the name was changed to Missouri River, Fort Scott and Gulf Railroad company.

The Missouri River, Fort Scott and Gulf railroad company was sold under foreclosure, and reorganized March 22, 1879, as the Kansas City, Fort Scott and Gulf Railroad company, the distance from its terminal point being 665½ miles. The line of the road passes through the richest portions of Kansas and Missouri and the timber regions of Arkansas. Leaving Kansas City and traveling directly south, the line passed through the finest, the richest and most fertile section of Kansas. First comes Wyandotte county with a population of 19,143, then Johnson, population, 16,853; Miami, 17,802; Linn, 15,098; Bourbon, 18,591; Crawford, 16, 851, and Cherokee, 21,905.

Leaving Kansas at Fort Scott, the soil of Missouri is again traversed in a southeasterly direction, passing through the best portion of Missouri, the southwest. The road runs through first Barton county, with a population of 10,332; Dade, 12,557; Greene, 28,817; Christian, 9,623; Wright, 6,762; Texas, 7,762,; Douglass, 7,753; and Howell, 8,814.

How the Mint is Guarded.

Philadelphia Record.

"It would not be healthy for a burglar to attempt any of his tricks about the mint," said Colonel A. Louden Snowden yesterday. "About a year ago I caused all the muskets to be changed for repeating rifles and seven-shot carbines that are darlings. Our outside watchmen who patrol the streets about the place are well supplied with fire-arms. In fact, they are walking arsenals. We can readily arm every person in the building who can handle a pistol or gun. There is no trouble apprehended that I know of, and I can not divine why the secretary of the treasury has ordered Gatling guns and carbines for the mints. I have not requested any, because we are sufficiently armed. At this time there are being turned out over a million of standard dollars each month and we frequently have $15,000,000 in silver in the vaults. But it would take a little army with canons to get at it."

A Russian writer has just returned from Siberia, after being exiled since 1862. His name is Schernischefski. The cause of his being permitted to resume his position in the world is the difficulty experienced by the people of Siberia in pronouncing his name.

Phillips Exeter academy has, the Portsmouth Chronicle says, a student who boards himself on fourteen cents a day.